

News Release

United Way Funds Collaboration between Crookston Elementary Schools and U of M Crookston Resulting in "Project Strong Start" Encouraging Elementary Students to Think about Attending College

By Itollefs on Friday, May 28, 2010



A partnership between Crookston's elementary schools and the University of Minnesota, Crookston encourages elementary students to think about attending college at an early age. Project Strong Start was designed as a college day, bilingual-learning experience prompting fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students, to aspire to a college education. There were 112 fifth grade students visiting the campus on Thursday, May 27, 2010, as part of Project Strong Start. The project was fully funded through a grant from United Way.

The learning objectives of Project Strong Start were to inspire college readiness, demystify the college experience by addressing the practical concerns of preparing for and paying for college, and learning about local colleges and career opportunities available to students.

Tim Menard from the Office of Admissions at the U of M, Crookston was happy with the students' interest and enthusiasm. "The learning experience, based in the *Wiley's Way* curriculum, consists of three activities which let students know that they are expected to prepare for college by working hard and taking rigorous courses," explained Menard. "It's never too early to begin thinking about and planning for college."

Along with campus tours and lunch in Brown Dining Room, Regal the Eagle was on hand to meet the fifth graders. Funding from the grant was also used to provide a chapter book for each.

Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers more than 25 bachelor's degree programs and 50 concentrations, including several online degrees, in agriculture and natural resources; arts, humanities and social sciences; business; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of about 1,300 undergraduates, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit [www.umcrookston.edu](http://www.umcrookston.edu).

*In the photo: Tim Menard, admissions counselor, addresses fifth graders from the Crookston elementary schools as part of Project Strong Start. (Photo courtesy of the Crookston Daily Times.)*

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2900 University Ave., Crookston, MN 56716  
800-862-6466 | 218-281-6510 | [umcinfo@umn.edu](mailto:umcinfo@umn.edu)  
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